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Book Review

A Short Textbook of Venereology. The Sexually-Transmitted Diseases. 2nd ed., 1974. By R. D. CATTERALL. Pp. 214, 50 figs. English Universities Press, London (£4.45; paper-back £2.25)

The second edition of this excellent short text book has had to be completely revised in view of the advances in the field of venereology during the last 10 years. The attempt to take a global view of medicine is to-day essential in view of the increasing availability of air travel and the greater awareness of the magnitude of the problem of sexually-transmitted diseases in Africa, Asia, and elsewhere.

The initial chapter provides a lucid description of the practice of venereology with its attendant public health, educational, and social problems. The section on gonorrhoea occupies just over 10 per cent of the total text, and while this may seem insufficient in view of the pandemic with this organism, little of value has been omitted. The

repetition of the differential diagnosis of both urethral discharge and vaginal discharge throughout the book, is of value to the undergraduate and postgraduate student who has had little previous experience in the field. The author is to be congratulated on the comprehensive chapter on the examination of patients and in the emphasis throughout the book that the practice of venereology is not an isolated entity but an integral part of the spectrum of medicine.

There will always be minor criticisms and personal therapeutic preferences. Many would prefer not to discuss keratoderma blennorrhagica in relation to acute gonorrhoea, and perhaps spectinomycin is a suitable alternative parenteral therapy for gonorrhoea in patients with a history of penicillin sensitivity.

The author's first edition was a landmark in venereology textbooks, providing a short, comprehensive, and inexpensive text on the practice of this aspect of Medicine; the second edition continues the tradition.

J. R. W. Harris